

THE
Occasional Paper

Upon the Subject of RELIGION, and
the CHURCH ESTABLISHMENT ; *and* the
present ATTEMPTS against them.

NUMBER III.

Shewing the SENSE of our *First Reformers*,
and of other Pious and Learned Divines,
concerning the PREPARATION that is requi-
site to make a *worthy* Partaker of the HOLY
SACRAMENT.



L O N D O N :

Printed for, and Sold by J. ROBERTS, at the
Oxford-Arms in *Warwick-Lane*. 1735.

[Price Three Pence.]

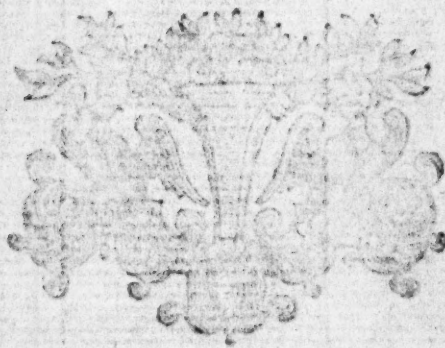
THE

Occasional Paper

Upon the Subject of Religion, and
the Church Establishment; and the
present ATTEMPT to agitate them.

NUMBER III.

Showing the Danger of our *First Reformers*
and of other Pious and Learned Divines,
concerning the Preparation that is requir-
ed to make a worthy Partaker of the Holy
SACRAMENT.



LONDON:

Printed for, and Sold by J. ROBERTS, at the
Coffee-House in Warwick-Lane. 1785.

[Price Three Pence]



THE
Occasional Paper, &c.

THE Sacrament of the
Lord's Supper, and the
Preparation for it, ha-
ving been made the Subject of
Discourse for some Months past;
I consider'd with myself how a
plain well-meaning Christian, who
has neither Leisure nor Ability to
enter into the Controversies of
learned Men, might give himself
some reasonable Satisfaction upon
that important Point. I found,
there was a Dispute growing a-
mong us, about the *Sense* and *La-*

titude in which we are to understand what the Scripture has delivered, and what the *Nature and End* of the Institution suggest, concerning the *Preparation* that is requisite to make a *worthy* Communicant. And it occurred to me, that there was one Sort of Enquiry, which a Person of common Understanding was capable of making, and which might give some Degree of Ease and Satisfaction to his Mind; and that was, to see, what our most learned and pious Divines since the Reformation have said concerning that Point, and how far they were uniform in their Judgments upon it. My Enquiry began with the Reign of *Edward* the Sixth; when our *English* Historians inform us, that the Reformation in Doctrine and Worship was begun and carried on in good Earnest, under the Direction of Archbishop *Cranmer*, and other learned Bishops and Divines; many of whom were afterwards

wards eminent Sufferers for Religion in the Reign of Queen *Mary*. And the Heads upon which I enquired; were these two: 1. What Directions have been given about it, from time to time, in the publick Acts and Offices of our Reformed Church? 2. What has been the Sense of our most eminent Divines upon that Point?

I. In the first Year of *Edw. 6.* before the new Communion-Office was settled, a publick Direction was given to the Priest (who should minister the blessed Sacrament) “ at least one Day before, to exhort all “ Persons which should be present, “ to resort and PREPARE themselves to receive the same; and “ he is further directed, when the “ Day prefixed cometh, to make a “ *godly Exhortation*, wherein shall “ be further expressed the *Benefit* “ and *Comfort* promised to them “ which WORTHILY receive the Holy
 “ Sacrament,

“ Sacrament, and *Danger* and *In-*
 “ *dignation* of God, *threatned* to
 “ *them* which shall presume to re-
 “ *ceive* it unworthily ; to the End
 “ that every Man may try and
 “ EXAMINE his own Conscience, be-
 “ fore he shall receive the *same*.

In the second Year of *Edward*
 the Sixth, was set forth the Com-
 munion-Office, as it had been
 drawn and prepared by the said
 Archbishop, Bishops, and other Di-
 vines ; and what their Sense was of
 the *previous* Examination, will ap-
 pear from the *previous* Exhortation
 to be given by every Minister. ---

“ My Duty is to exhort you, in the
 “ mean Season, to consider the
 “ *Greatness* of the Thing, and to
 “ *search* and *examin* your own
 “ Consciences, and that not lightly
 “ nor after the Manner of Dissimu-
 “ lers with God, but as they which
 “ should come to a most godly and
 “ heavenly Banquet, not to come
 “ but

“ but in the Marriage-Garment re-
 “ quired of God in Scripture ; that
 “ you may, so much as lieth in
 “ you, be found *worthy* to come to
 “ such a Table. The Ways and
 “ Means thereto is, That you be
 “ truly *repentaunt* of your former
 “ evil Life, and that you *confess*
 “ with an unfayned Heart to Al-
 “ mighty God, your Sins and Un-
 “ kindness towards his Majesty
 “ committed, either by Will, Word
 “ or Deed, Infirmitie or Ignorance;
 “ and that with inward *Sorrow* and
 “ Tears, you bewaile your Offen-
 “ ces, and require of Almighty
 “ God Mercy and Pardon ; promi-
 “ sing to him, from the Bottom of
 “ your Hearts, the Amendment of
 “ your former Life. ” As the Ex-
 hortation, of which this is a Part,
 immediately follows that other
 which expressly urges the Direc-
 tion given by St. *Paul* to *examin*
 ourselves ; it shews clearly, what
 the

the *Examination* was, that those pious and learned Fathers of the Church understood to be the Meaning of the Apostle. And the strong Caution which that Office gives against *receiving unworthily*, (the same Caution, in Substance, with that in our Communion-Office at this Day) shews very plainly, that they thought unworthy receiving to consist in the *Neglect* of such previous Examination.

The like Exhortation, somewhat differently expressed, was continued in the Communion-Office, upon the Review of it in the fifth Year of the same Reign : --- “ The Holy
 “ Sacrament --- being so com-
 “ fortable a Thing to them which
 “ receive it *worthily*, and so dan-
 “ gerous to them that will pre-
 “ sume to receive it unworthily ;
 “ my Duty is, to exhort you to con-
 “ sider the *Dignity* of the Holy
 “ Mystery, and the great Peril of
 “ the

" the *unworthy* receiving thereof,
 " and so to *search* and *examin*
 " your own Consciences so as you
 " should come holy and clean to
 " a most godly and heavenly Feast,
 " so that in no wise you come,
 " but in the Marriage - Garment
 " required by God in Holy Scrip-
 " ture; and so come and be receiv-
 " ed as *worthy* Partakers of such an
 " heavenly Table. " The Way
 " and Means thereto, is, First, To
 " *examin* your Lives and Conver-
 " sation by the Rule of God's
 " Commandments; and wherein
 " soever ye shall perceive yourselves
 " to have offended, either by Will,
 " Word, or Deed, there bewail your
 " own sinful Lives; confess your
 " selves to Almighty God, with
 " full Purpose of Amendment of
 " Life. "

The same is the Language of the
 Book of *Homilies*, composed by the
 same pious and learned Hands, and

B set
 legible

set forth in the same Reign. ---

Pag. 270. " That we may fruitfully use St.
 " Paul's Counsel, *Let a Man*
 " *prove himself, and so eat of that*
 " *Bread and drink of that Cup* ";
 " we must certainly know, that
 " three Things be requisite in him,
 " which would seemly, as becometh
 " such high Mysteries, resort to the
 " Lord's Table ; that is, first, a
 " right and worthy Estimation and
 " Understanding of this Mystery :
 " Secondly, To come in a sure
 " Faith ; and, thirdly, to have
 " Newness and Pureness of Life to
 " succeed the receiving of the
 " same." And in the same Homi-
 " ly, -- " Wherefore let us prove
 " and try ourselves unfeignedly
 " (without flattering ourselves)
 " whether we be Plants of the fruit-
 " ful Olive, living Branches of the
 " true Vine, Members indeed of
 " Christ's mystical Body ; whether
 " God hath purified our Hearts by
 " Faith, to the sincere acknow-
 " ledging

" ledging of his Gospel, and em-
 " bracing of his Mercies in Christ
 " Jesus ; so that at this Table we
 " receive not only the outward Sa-
 " crament, but the Spiritual thing
 " also." And again, after having
 press'd the Necessity of *Preparation*
 in order to avoid the Danger of
 unworthy Receiving, and particu-
 larly mentioned the Crime of the
Corinthians ; the Inference and
 Application is as follows ; " Where-
 " fore let all, universal and singu-
 " lar, behold our own Manners
 " and Lives, to amend them. Yea,
 " now at the least, let us call our-
 " selves to an Account, that it may
 " grieve us of our former evil
 " Conversation, that we may hate
 " Sin, that we may sorrow and
 " mourn for our Offences, that we
 " may with Tears pour them out
 " before God, that we may with
 " sure Trust desire and crave the
 " Salve of his Mercy, bought and
 " purchas'd with the Blood of his

“dearly beloved Son Jesus Christ,
 “to heal our deadly Wounds
 “withall.”

The same Book of Homilies being approved in the Reign of Queen *Elizabeth*, was enjoyn'd to be read in all Churches; and, as to the Communion-Office, when some other Alterations were made in the Common Prayer, and the Book ratified anew in the Beginning of that Reign, this Office was continued as it had been settled in the 5th of *Edw. 6.*

In the First Year of King *James* the First, the Archbishop, Bishops, and other Divines who bore a Part in the Conference before the King at *Hampton Court*, were directed to draw up an Addition to the Church-Catechism, concerning the two Sacraments. And their Thoughts about the Preparation for the Lord's Supper are fully express'd in the Answer to the Question, What is required of them who come to the

the Lord's Supper? *viz.* "To Ex-
 "amin themselves, whether they
 "repent them truly of their for-
 "mer Sins, stedfastly purposing to
 "lead a new Life, have a lively
 "Faith in God's Mercy thro' Christ,
 "with a thankful Remembrance
 "of his Death, and be in Charity
 "with all Men.

At the Restoration, the whole Book of Common Prayer underwent a new Examination by the Bishops and Clergy; and the Directions which relate to the Preparation for the Holy Sacrament, as above, were continued and confirmed with some small Variation in the Expressions; as will appear to any one who will compare the Clauses in the Communion-Office and Catechism, as before recited, with those which are in our present Book of Common Prayer.

And after the Revolution, when the Book of Common Prayer was again revised by a Number of Bishops

shops and Clergy of the greatest Eminence, I am well assured, that the Directions concerning the Preparation for the Holy Sacrament, both in the Communion-Office and Catechism, were continued as they had been settled before by the Advice of the Bishops and Clergy in the successive Reigns of *Edw. 6. Queen Elizabeth, King James the First, and King Charles the Second.* And in all of them, the Duty of *Judging ourselves* before we presume to come to the Lord's Table, and the Danger of receiving *unworthily*, or without such *Preparation* as they direct, are set forth in the strongest Manner, and much in the same Terms, as in our present Communion-Office.

By these Extracts which I made for my Information, it appear'd to me beyond all Doubt, what has been the Sense of our greatest Divines since the Reformation, concerning the Preparation
for

for the Holy Sacrament, as that is declared in our *publick* Acts and Offices ; which are known to have been drawn up by select Bodies of those learned and eminent Men in the several Reigns.

II. The same I find to be the Sense of many *particular Writers*, of great Note and Authority.

Dr. *Hammond*, speaking of the Word *Examin*, according to the proper Meaning of it in the Original, says, it signifys to *prove* and *try*, and so to *examin* and *prove* as to APPROVE ; and, with particular Reference to the Use of it by St. *Paul*, as a Preparation for the Holy Sacrament, he says, *It must there signify the APPROVING himself to God and his own Conscience.* And in his *Practical Catechism*, he explains his Meaning more distinctly as follows : “ The Particulars, of which
“ we must *Examin*, and which we
“ must *require* of ourselves, are,
“ I. True Repentance { contain-
“ ing

" ing Sense, Sorrow, Humiliati-
 " on, Contrition, Confession) of
 " all former Sins. 2. A steadfast
 " Purpose to lead a new Life, a
 " Resolution to reform all, and
 " that Resolution such as will stand
 " fast in the Hour of Trial or
 " Temptation. ----

Mr. Mede is full and clear to the
 same Purpose, ---- " As God saith,
 Pag. 340. " Be you *Holy*, because I am *Holy*;
 " so may it be said of all Commu-
 " nicants, *Be you Holy, because the*
 " *Sacrament is Holy*. Whence it
 " was a worthy Custom in the
 " ancient Churches, for the Bishop
 " or Deacon to proclaim at the
 " Communion, *Holy Things for*
 " *them that are Holy*; holding in
 " his Hand the Holy Sacrament.
 " And good Reason why, for where
 " this Holiness is not, the Heart is
 " more and more corrupted."

And Dr. Barrow speaking of the
 Apostle's Direction to the *Corin-*
thians, concerning the Holy Sacra-
 ment:

ment: " We should, says he, ac- Bar. Vol. I
Pag. 551
 " cording to St. Paul's Advice,
 " *examin* and *approve* ourselves;
 " considering our past Actions, and
 " our present Inclinations, and,
 " accordingly, by serious Medi-
 " tation and fervent Prayer to
 " God for his gracious Assistance
 " therein, working ourselves into
 " a hearty Remorse for our past
 " Miscarriages, and a sincere Re-
 " solution to amend for the Fu-
 " ture; forsaking all Sin, endea-
 " vouring in all our Actions to
 " serve and please God; *purging*
 " *out* (as St. Paul again enjoineth
 " us) *the old Leaven of Vice and*
 " *Wickedness*; so that we may
 " feast and celebrate this Passover,
 " in the unleavened Dispositions
 " of *Sincerity and Truth*.

Archbishop Tillotson, at the same
 time that he endeavours to remove
 all *groundless* Discouragements
 from coming to the Holy Sacra-
 ment (as the Generality of our Di-

Tillot.
Vol. I.
p. 231.

vines ever since the *Restoration* have also done,) observes, " That
" all that can reasonably be in-
" ferr'd from the Danger of un-
" worthy receiving, is, that upon
" this Consideration Men should
" be quicken'd to come to the
" Sacrament with a due *Prepara-*
" *tion* of Mind, and so much the
" more to fortify their *Resolutions*
" of living suitably to that Holy
" Covenant, which they solemnly
" *renew* every time they receive
" this Holy Sacrament.

Calamy's
Sermons,
p. 48.

The same I find to be the Rea-
soning of Dr. *Benjamin Calamy* :
" Let the Danger of receiving un-
" worthily be never so great, the
" Consideration of this ought on-
" ly to make us so much the more
" careful to receive it after a right
" and acceptable Manner, and
" to put us upon greater Watch-
" fulness over ourselves, when we
" meddle with such *sacred* things.
" This is the Use we ought to
" make

“ make of these Words of the
 “ Apostle [about unworthy re-
 “ ceiving :] Not rashly or pre-
 “ cipitately, without due Prepa-
 “ ration or Consideration, to rush
 “ upon this Holy Sacrament, but
 “ seriously to mind the End and
 “ Design of it, and so duly to af-
 “ fect our Spirits with the things
 “ represented to us by it, that
 “ they may make lively and last-
 “ ing Impressions upon us, and
 “ we may bring forth the Fruit
 “ of all, in a holy and unblamable
 “ Conversation in the World.”

Archbishop *Sharp*, upon the
 same Subject, says thus : — “ That ^{*Sharp,*}
 “ serious Reflexion upon a Man’s ^{*Vol. II.*}
 “ own Ways ; that careful *Exami-*
 “ *nation* and *Enquiry* into the
 “ State of his own Soul ; those
 “ Expressions of Sorrow and Re-
 “ pentance for what he finds a-
 “ miss in himself ; and the earn-
 “ est Prayers he makes to God for
 “ his Grace, together with the
 “ hearty

“ hearty Resolutions he enters in-
 “ to, of a better Obedience for
 “ the Future: All these things
 “ are necessary Preparations for
 “ the worthy Partaking of this
 “ solemn Myſtery; eſpecially in
 “ one that comes but ſeldom to
 “ it; for indeed the Caſe is other-
 “ wiſe as to thoſe that ſo live,
 “ as to be *always prepar'd* for it.”

Biſhop *Fleetwood* wrote a Trea-
 tiſe upon the Holy Sacrament, by
 way of Dialogue between himſelf
 and a Pariſhioner; and the Preface
 to it begins thus: “ Having been
 “ often call'd upon, both by my
 “ Office, and Rules of Charity, to
 “ aſſiſt good People, who were
 “ willing to underſtand and do
 “ their Duty, in their Preparation
 “ for the Sacrament; I never fail'd
 “ of explaining the latter Part of
 “ the *Church Catchiſm*, which
 “ relates to the Lord's Supper, by
 “ the *Communion Service*, and re-
 “ commending it to their frequent
 “ Reading

" Reading and most serious Me-
" ditation." And speaking of the
" *Commemoration* to be made, he ap-
" proves the Account which the Pa-
" rishioner gives of it: " Nor must Pag. 74.
" I commemorate this Death, bare-
" ly as the Death of Christ, but as
" he was a *Sacrifice for Sin*, i. e.
" if I understand it right, his Life
" was offered up to God, upon the
" Cross, for the *Expiation of the*
" *Sins of the World*, and for the
" *Atonement of God's Anger.* —
" When therefore I commemorate
" the Death of Christ, I must re-
" member, not only that he died,
" but that his Life was offered up
" to God a *Sacrifice*, and was ac-
" cepted of him for the Sins of the
" whole World. " And explain-
" ing to his Parishioner what he is to
" understand by *unworthy receiving*,
" he says, " To come unworthily, Pag. 90.
" is to come without any Repen-
" tance or Sorrow for past Offen-
" ces, and without any Resolutions
" of

" of Amendment for the future.
 " And such a coming as this must
 " necessarily increase a Man's Dam-
 " nation, because he does apparently
 " despise his Saviour, and insult his
 " holy Ordinance ; the whole De-
 " sign of which, and almost every
 " Word of which, supposes Sorrow
 " for his Sins past, and purposes of
 " Amendment for the Time to
 " come. "

To these I will add but one
 more, and that is, Dr. *Burnet*, late
 Master of the *Charter-House*, who
 in his Book of the *Faith and Duties*
 of a *Christian*, speaking of the
 Pag. 20. Lord's Supper, says, " In the Cele-
 " bration of this, we do not only re-
 " quire Reverence and Piety, but the
 " laying aside all Enmity, and the
 " having universal Charity. Here-
 " in, we *renew* the Engagement
 " which we made to Christ in our
 " Baptism; and if we find we have
 " violated it, we *repent*, and pro-
 " mise future *Amendment* of Life
 " and Manners. After

After such a Deduction of Authorities, from the Beginning of the Reformation to our own time, no doubt could remain with me, as to the Sense of our *English* Divines who have been most eminent for Learning and Piety, concerning the Point I was enquiring after. But I had the further Curiosity to enquire of Persons who were well able to inform me, what has been, and still is, the Sense of *foreign Reform'd Churches* in this Point; and I find, that it has been, and still is, usual in most if not all of them, to have a *Preparation Sermon* on some Day of the Week, before every stated Time of receiving the Holy Sacrament; and this being their *Practice*, there can be no Doubt about their *Opinion*.

My Enquiries being thus finish'd, it was no small Comfort to me, to find my own Judgment and Practice in this Matter confirm'd by
the

the concurrent Authority of so many great and good Men ; who grounded their Doctrin upon what they conceived to be the true Meaning of the Scripture and agreeable to the *Nature* and End of that Holy Institution. And what has been my Practice hitherto, shall, by the Grace of God, continue to be so ; not doubting, but that if I first prepare myself, by examining my Life, and repenting of my past Sins, and resolving to be careful of my Duty for the time to come, and then thankfully lay hold on the Atonement made by Christ upon the Cross, for the Sins of Mankind, God will accept me as a *worthy* Receiver, and grant me such a Measure of his Grace and holy Spirit, as may enable me to perform the Resolutions I make ; but greatly *doubting*, whether he will accept my Performance of this Office upon any *other* Terms ; or rather, being fully persuaded, that he will not.

F I N I S.

